

Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI) Information Sheet

What is an Arc Fault Interrupter?

An Arc Fault Interrupter (AFCI) is an electrical device that detects and protects against arching (electricity going where it is not intended to be). Arching faults often occur in damaged or deteriorated wiring and chords. Examples include: puncturing a wire while hanging a picture; poorly installed outlets or switches; chords caught in doors or under furniture; furniture pushed against a plug in an outlet or overheated and/or stressed electrical cords. Once arching is detected the device trips and de-energizes the circuit.

What is the difference between and AFCI and a GFCI?

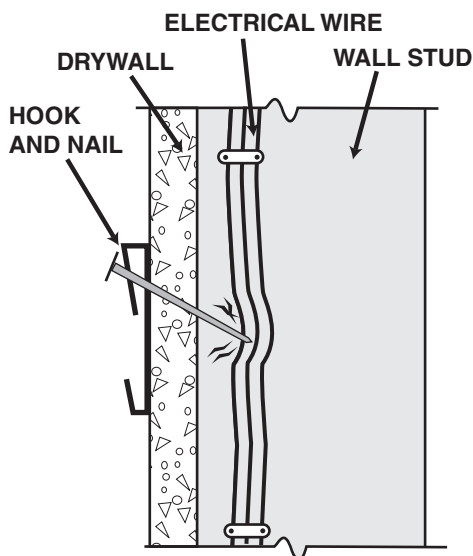
In simplistic terms the AFCI protects against fire hazards, while the GFCI protects against personal injury such as shocks related to water contact.

Where are AFCI devices required to be located?

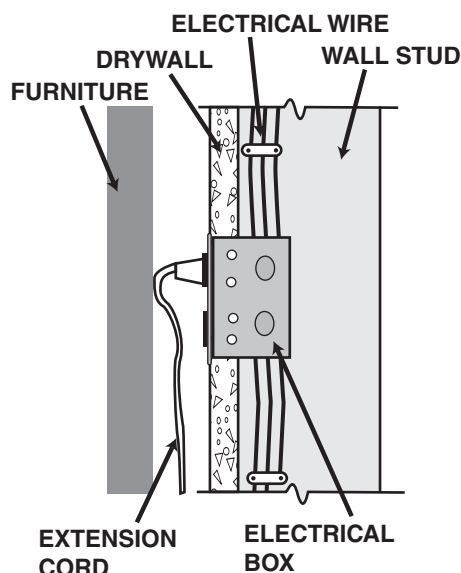
The *National Electrical Code* states the following regarding AFCI devices in Dwelling units:

"All 120-volt, single phase, 15 and 20 – ampere branch circuits supplying outlets installed in dwelling unit family rooms, dinning rooms, living rooms, parlors, libraries, dens bedrooms, sunrooms, recreation rooms, closets, hallways or similar rooms or areas shall be protected by a listed arc-fault circuit interrupter, **combination type**, installed to provide protection of the branch circuit. Placement of the device in the circuit and a review of the UL guide information must be considered when complying with this NEC section. Branch circuit extensions of existing circuits also require AFCI protection."

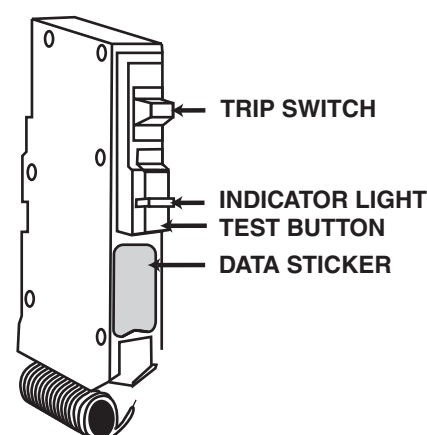
Nail in electrical wire



Furniture against cord



AFCI breaker



AFCI's have a test button on them and should be tested monthly. Press and hold the test button, the AFCI should trip. To re-set the AFCI, switch the breaker to the off position and then switch to the on position.

This information is a guide to the most common questions. It is not intended, nor shall it be considered, a complete set of requirements.